

VA COMPENSATION & PENSION

Understanding Review Examinations

WHAT ARE REVIEW EXAMINATIONS?

Review examinations are requested by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to check the severity of your service-connected disability.

WHY ARE REVIEW EXAMINATIONS REQUESTED?

VA will request review exams when:

- ▶ We need to assess the severity of a disability, or
- ▶ Evidence indicates there has been an important and relevant (or "material") change in a disability, or
- ▶ By law, we are required to conduct a periodic review.

VA will use this review exam, and any other relevant evidence, to assess the severity of your disability.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE VA REVIEW EXAM?

A medical professional will conduct the VA review exams. Examiners and staff will not be able to answer specific questions about your benefits; their role is to assess your medical condition.

Note: You may be examined in-person, or you may be questioned by telephone if we decide an in-person exam is not necessary. Sometimes the VA examiner may be able to complete the exam report by reviewing your medical records without an in-person exam or call.

The time you will spend with the clinician varies from person to person based on your claimed conditions.

The examiner may take various actions such as:

- ▶ Ask you questions.
- ▶ Perform a physical exam.
- ▶ Send you for X-rays or lab work.
- ▶ Observe your behavior.
- ▶ Review your file with you.

WHAT IF THE SEVERITY OF MY DISABILITY HAS CHANGED?

Based on a review of your disability, we will prepare a new decision and contact you by mail. One of three things will happen:

1. Your disability remains the same, or
2. Your disability has worsened and an increase in benefits may be justified, or
3. Your disability has improved and a reduction in benefits may be justified.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DON'T GO TO MY REVIEW EXAMINATION?

If you miss your review exam, it may affect your benefits. Please call us to reschedule if you cannot attend. Medical evidence that could have been used from your review exam would not be available to us. VA will then be required by law to use the evidence on file to make a decision to:

- ▶ Continue payment, if our evidence shows no change in the severity, or
- ▶ Reduce payment for the disability or disabilities to the minimum amount established by law, or
- ▶ Discontinue payment for the disability or disabilities.

REMEMBER: The examiner is only involved in performing the review exam. They do not make the rating decision. Only a VA regional office can answer questions regarding the review exam process.

For more information, visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claimexam.asp>



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs



Your VA Claim Exam

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